LOK SABHA

Monday, March 10, 1997/Phalguna 19, 1918 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Three Minutes Past Eleven of the Clock.

[MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

[English]

OBITUARY REFERENCES

MR. SPEAKER : Hon. Members, I have to inform the House with a deep sense of sorrow of the passing away of our esteemed friends, Sarvashri Shyamlal Dhurve and B. Gopala Reddi.

Shri Shyamlal Dhurve was a Member of Sixth Lok Sabha representing Mandla Parliamentary Constituency of Madhya Pradesh during 1977-79.

Earlier, he was a Member of Madhya Pradesh Legislative Assembly during 1972-77.

An agriculturist by profession, Shri Dhurve was a prominent political and social worker. He worked tirelessly for the upliftment of the downtrodden sections of the society, particularly the tribals of the State.

Shri Shyamlal Dhurve passed away at village Amarpur, Mandla, Madhya Pradesh on 21 February, 1997 at the age of 63 years.

Shri B. Gopala Reddi was a Member of Third Lok Sabha representing Kavali Parliamentary Constituency of Andhra Pradesh during 1962-67.

Earlier, he was a Member of Madras Legislative Assembly during 1937-39 and again in 1946.

He was also a Member of Rajya Sabha during 1958-62.

He was Minister of Finance in the Government of erstwhile Madras State during 1947-52 and also the Leader of the Madras Legislative Assembly during 1948-52.

Shri Reddi was a Member of Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly in 1955 and served as the Chief Minister of the State during 1955-56.

An able Parliamentarian, Shri Reddi served the country as Minister in the Union Government and held various portfolios during 1958-63.

Shri Reddy also served as Governor of Uttar Pradesh.

A veteran freedom fighter, Shri Reddi participated in Satyagraha movement, civil disobedience movement and suffered imprisonment for several years.

Having graduated from Vishwa Bharathi at Shantiniketan and translated Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore's works into Telugu, he represented the composite culture of India. He has a significant place amongst the Telugu litterateurs of the country as well.

Shri B. Gopala Reddi passed away at Hyderabad on 9 March, 1997 at the age of 90 years.

We deeply mourn the loss of these friends and, I am sure, the House will join me in conveying our condolences to the bereaved families.

The House may now stand in silence for a short while as a mark of respect to the deceased.

11.06 hrs.

The Members then stood in silence for a short while.

11.07 hrs.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Mid-Day Meal Scheme

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*201. SHRI JANG BAHADUR SINGH PATEL :
SHRI MAHESH KUMAR M. KANODIA :

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the mid-day meal scheme launched by the Government has not yielded results as per expectation;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government have conducted any inquiry to find out the cases of irregularities, if any;

(d) if so, the outcome thereof and the action taken by the Government in this regard; and

(e) the details of expenditure incurred on the scheme so far?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI S.R. BOMMAI) : (a) to (e) A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Statement

(a) to (d) The National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education, commonly known as Mid-Day Meal Scheme, launched on 15 August, 1995, in the country, is intended to give a boost to universalisation of primary education by increasing enrolment, retention and attendance and simultaneously impacting on nutrition of students in primary classes. It

is being implemented in all States and Union Territories. 5.57 crore children in about 5 lakh schools in 4426 blocks in 475 districts have been covered by the scheme so far.

As the scheme has been launched last year, no evaluation of its impact has been conducted so far. However, initial reports received from States/UTs reveal a favourable impact on enrolment and attendance of children in primary classes.

(e) Expenditure incurred on the scheme, so far, is as under :

	Rs. in crore
(i) 1995-96	441.21
(ii) 1996-97 (Upto 28.2.97)	506.59

SHRI S.R. BOMMAI : Sir, I would like to make a correction in the answer. At the end of the reply the expenditure incurred for 1996-97 (28.02.97) has been shown as 506.59 crore. The latest figure is Rs. 613 crore.

MR. SPEAKER : Yes, Mr. Patel, you please ask the supplementary now.

[Translation]

SHRI JANG BAHADUR PATEL : Hon'ble Speaker, mid day meal scheme has been implemented only in the schools of Basic Education Council. It has not been implemented in recognised schools. Schools run by societies and aided schools.

VAIDYA DAU DAYAL JOSHI : Actually it is not being implemented even in the schools where it should have been implemented.

SHRI JANG BAHADUR PATEL : Where it has been implemented, there also uncooked foodgrains - three kilogram rice or wheat is being distributed and that also such foodgrains which has got rotten in the store. A question was raised with regard to the inquiry into the irregularities. It has also not been replied. I would like to know from the Hon'ble Minister whether this scheme would also be introduced in aided schools, recognised schools and the schools being run by societies where attendance is good and good education is being provided.

[English]

SHRI S.R. BOMMAI : Sir, this scheme is now restricted to students of Class I to Class V in the Government schools, local bodies and Government aided schools. The Government is not thinking of extending it to the other schools at the present moment.

So far as the supply is concerned, regular supply is done by the Food Corporation of India. The State Governments would have to lift it. We give Rupees 25 per Quintal transport charges. For hill stations, we give higher charges. It is for the State Government to decide whether to give cooked food or to distribute foodgrains. Some States are giving cooked food, but most of the States are giving foodgrains.

[Translation]

SHRI JANG BAHADUR PATEL : Sir, whether the arrangement for fire wood for cooking meal would be made by the state Government or Central Government.

[English]

SHRI S.R. BOMMAI : As it is, the Government of India is not doing it. Some States are doing it and some States are not doing it. In some places, village panchayats and voluntary organisations are doing it. But, there is a proposal that cooked food should be supplied to all the schools. For this, fifty per cent expenditure will be borne by the State Governments and fifty per cent expenditure by the Central Government.

[Translation]

SHRI JANG BAHADUR PATEL : Sir, it is being said that the number of children has increase in schools due to Mid day Meal Scheme. I would like to ask the Minister whether he funds would be increased keeping in view the increased number of children.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : No.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM SAGAR : Mr. Speaker, Sir, there are two-three retail shops in a block in Uttar Pradesh which have been assigned the responsibility of distributing nutritional support. I am sure about it. I would like to ask the hon'ble Minister whether the foodgrain is being sold in whole sale. Where it is not being distributed properly. It is not being monitored by the Government. It should be monitored by the Government so that this scheme may be implemented for children in schools. I would like to ask the Minister whether the Government would take concrete steps for implementing this scheme so that this scheme may be implemented for children.

[English]

SHRI S.R. BOMMAI : So far as foodgrains are concerned, they are supplied through the PDS shops. It is for the State Governments to lift it and hand it over to the schools. Monitoring is also done by the Deputy Commissioner at the district level and by the village panchayat at the village level. We have asked the State Governments to assign this to a particular Department which can monitor it regularly.

[Translation]

SHRI VISHWESHWAR BHAGAT : Sir, this scheme was introduced to attract the children for coming to schools and to give a boost to their attendance, boost the attendance of the children but two-two and a half-three kilogramme rice is being given for the whole of the month and the Mid Day Meal Scheme is not being

implemented. The attendance of children is also not increasing due to this fact. There is no attraction in children. I would like to ask the hon'ble Minister, whether the Government would make arrangement to ensure availability of meal in schools and at the same time would issue any direction providing rice for the month with a view to provide food daily.

[English]

SHRI S.R. BOMMAI : I appreciate the point raised by the hon. Member. I have already stated that some States are giving cooked food. For example, the Delhi Government is giving bread and the Tamil Nadu Government is giving cooked rice. Some States are doing it at their own cost.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE : Some States are digesting it.

SHRI S.R. BOMMAI : It is meant for digestion. Foodgrains are meant for digestion.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE : But not by adults, but by children.

SHRI S.R. BOMMAI : The matter was discussed in a conference of state Education Ministers held on 10 August, 1997. The Committee held six or seven meetings. They have recommended that cooked food should be given so that it directly helps the children and the cost should be borne by both the Central Government and the State Government on fifty-fifty basis. The matter has to be considered by the Central Government. I am taking up the matter with the Cabinet.

[Translation]

LT. GENERAL SHRI PRAKASH MANI TRIPATHI : Mr. Speaker, Sir, as the hon'ble Minister has stated, this scheme is being run for more than two years. All these are Government statistics. People's representation are present here. This scheme has not been successful at any place. Will the hon'ble Minister be pleased to state any other way than the Government statistics whereby its correct position could be ascertained. This scheme has certainly given boost to the number of school going children. But, have they got meals? It is a fact that this scheme has failed in whole of the country and the Government have spend Rs. 526 crores. This scheme would be more successful, if meal is provided in schools. But, if foodgrains are provided, it would definitely be a failure. You leave the Government figures and you can take the opinions of the people's representatives. Will the Minister think over it?

[English]

SHRI S.R. BOMMAI : Sir, I do agree with the hon. Member's view that it would be better to give cooked food as then only it would directly reach the child. Some States are already doing it, as I have already said and I will repeat it. For example, the Delhi Government is giving bread and every child gets it. In Tamil Nadu, it is being done for the last 20 years, since the days of Shri K. Kamraj. Rice is being given there.

[Translation]

SHRI ANAND RATNA MAURYA : Is there any other state except the two states?...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI S.R. BOMAI : Let me answer.

[Translation]

SHRI ANAND RATNA MAURYA : Whether it is provided in any other state except Delhi and Tamilnadu...*(Interruptions)* In which state you propose to provide cooked food?...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : You do not have to answer the hon. Member.

SHRI S.R. BOMMAI : Even Haryana and Madhya Pradesh tried to give cooked food but they have stopped it now. I would repeat again. There is a proposal of the conference of State Education Ministers. Saikia, that cooked food should be given and its cost should be borne both by the Central Government and the State Government. I am taking up the matter with the Cabinet. The scheme needs revision, according to me also.

Baby Food Law

*202. SHRI RAM NAIK : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Was Baby food law flouted with a Vengeance" appearing in the `Times of India', Mumbai dated February 8, 1997;

(b) if so, the facts of the matter reported therein;

(c) whether Government are aware of the contents of the study conducted by Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) wherein 198 samples of commercial brands of infant food were included;

(d) if so, the outcome thereof;

(e) the action taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to enquire into defects observed by ICMR and award deterrent punishment to the guilty manufacturers; and

(f) whether the Government propose to consider to ban the manufacture and advertisement of these defective products?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI) : (a) to (f) A statement is laid on the table of the Lok Sabha.

Statement

The news item which highlights the alleged violation of some of the provisions of the Infant Milk Substitutes, Feeding Bottles and Infant Foods (Regulation of Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, 1992 has been seen.